

2. Promotion, Media, and Other Outreach methods

A concerted effort was made to promote Invent the Future using "old" and new media and "word of mouth" efforts. On June 1, CMAP issued a press release (<http://bit.ly/7rymy>) announcing the new outreach effort. On June 4, CMAP Board chairman Gerald Bennett was on WTTW's Chicago Tonight (<http://bit.ly/T00YL>). On that same date, the Chicago Tribune also ran a story (<http://bit.ly/h5Ksg>) that eventually appeared in most local suburban sections of the paper.

TimeOut Chicago ran an illustrated story in the first week of July (<http://bit.ly/1V18q2> and at right) that featured comments by average residents who had tried CMAP's MetroQuest software. Other coverage included the Sun-Times News Group, the Sun newspapers, Daily Herald, Northwest Herald, the Pioneer Press newspapers, the Suburban Life newspapers, the Business Ledger, the Drive 97.1 FM, and WCPT-820AM (Mike Nowak interview with Randy at <http://bit.ly/2ZsO0q>).

ABC-7 (see <http://bit.ly/11O5OJ> and image below, at right) aired a Frank Mathie interview with Randy Blankenhorn and CMAP summer intern Daniel Burnham V. In addition to news coverage, numerous routine calendar listings appeared regularly in local newspapers and websites across the region. For links and other details, see the attached list of Invent the Future media coverage

Special emphasis on getting coverage from bloggers and partners sites yield coverage at "new media" sites such as Chicago Now's "On Ramp," Chicago Content, Chicago Now, Chi-Town Daily News, Community Media Workshop, Evanston Now, Explore Chicago, Gapers Block, Hyde Park Progress, Next American City, the Urbanophile, and the Woodstock Advocate and the Windy Citizen.

Spreading the word about the workshops was also supported through the use of CMAP staff and partners. All CMAP staff were encouraged to take GO TO 2040 posters and postcards to their favorite local coffee shops or other locations. External Relations staff contacted community leaders in and around the workshop area to inform them and encourage attendance at the workshops. Staff also spent time at Metra locations handing out flyer for workshops and post workshop posters at train stations,



Figure 12 CMAP Board chairman Gerald Bennett on WTTW's Chicago Tonight



Figure 13 TimeOut Chicago article



Figure 14 CMAP executive director Randy Blankenhorn on ABC-7

libraries, bookstore, coffee shops, city halls, schools and other high traffic areas.

Many of the *GO TO 2040* Partners helped get the word out through their organization email blasts and newsletters, including the Active Transportation Alliance, Alliance for Public Transportation, Car Free Chicago, Chicago Wilderness, DevCorp North, Environmental Defenders of McHenry County, Fox River Ecosystem Partnership, League of Women Voters, Metropolitan Mayor's Caucus, Metropolitan Planning Council, and the Regional Transportation Authority. A full list of *GO TO 2040* Partners is available online (www.goto2040.org/partners.aspx). Former Tribune reporter Pat Reardon wrote extensively about CMAP and *GO TO 2040* in multiple entries at the Burnham Centennial blog (<http://bit.ly/kxvbG>).

Among the non-traditional mechanisms for getting the word out, staff have created *GO TO 2040* pages on YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com/goto2040>), Facebook (<http://bit.ly/Vq2xJ>), Twitter (<http://twitter.com/goto2040>), Flickr (http://www.flickr.com/photos/go_to_2040/) and the CMAP and *GO TO 2040* blogs. In addition to promoting Invent the Future in Randy Blankenhorn's weekly email updates, staff used Constant Contact "e-blast" software to send many dozens of targeted email announcements for the workshops and on-line tools.

To stimulate coverage midway through the input phase, CMAP issued a summary (<http://bit.ly/f8Mj7>) of input to date, which prompted another Tribune story (see image at right and <http://bit.ly/4sqxP>) that featured a large color photo from a workshop on the front page of Chicagoland Extra north editions and on the web.

All of the grassroots activities CMAP participated in were promoted on *GOTO2040.org* with a list of locations, dates, and times. The Citizens' Advisory Committee was also helpful in identifying fairs, festivals and events to promote *GO TO 2040* and the workshops. Additionally, a note about our participation was included in Randy's Weekly email.

To promote and schedule workshops across the region, CMAP first reached out to *GO TO 2040* Partners to see if they were interested in hosting or co-hosting an Invent the Future workshop with their members, at their organization, or in their community. The *GO TO 2040* Partnership program was created for stakeholders, local governments, schools, libraries, community-based organizations and individuals to get involved in the planning process. Through this program CMAP coordinated Community Conversations, execute six Bold Ideas Contest Programs, and helped staff identify festivals and workshop locations.

Once an initial list of workshop locations was in place, CMAP staff worked with its committee members and planning liaisons identify additional workshop locations. Workshops needed to be geographically diverse, as well as representative of the population in the seven-county region.

Workshops were promoted through a variety of means. Workshop dates, times, and locations were all posted online. Press releases were sent out to major media sources. If communities had a local events calendar staff worked to ensure that the workshop was listed locally. In

addition, CMAP created a promotional postcard and 11"x17" poster to hand out and place in and around local businesses. In some cases, workshop co-sponsors mailed the postcard out to their members. CMAP decided to focus more on web-based promotion than actual physical mailers. CMAP drew from its existing database of names and email addresses which now included the contact information from Community Conversations lists from the CMAP database of local and surrounding zip codes for each workshop and invited all of these individuals via email. The email included links to all scheduled workshops, a video describing what participants in a workshop could expect, and a link to the online MetroQuest software. In addition to traditional means of promotion staff blogged, tweeted, and promoted events through the *GO TO 2040* Facebook fan page.

At almost every workshop CMAP tracked how participants found out about the workshop they attended. This information was collected through keypad polling primarily to help CMAP understand what methods of promotion were getting people to the workshops. Most often we participants told us that they heard about the workshop through a partner organization. Quite a few people heard through word of mouth, but there was still a large proportion of respondents who selected "other." At several of the meetings, participants whose knowledge of the workshop came from "other" were asked to share with the group how they heard about the meeting. The typical response was an article in the local newspaper. In the future this information may help CMAP better focus our outreach methods to get people to workshops.

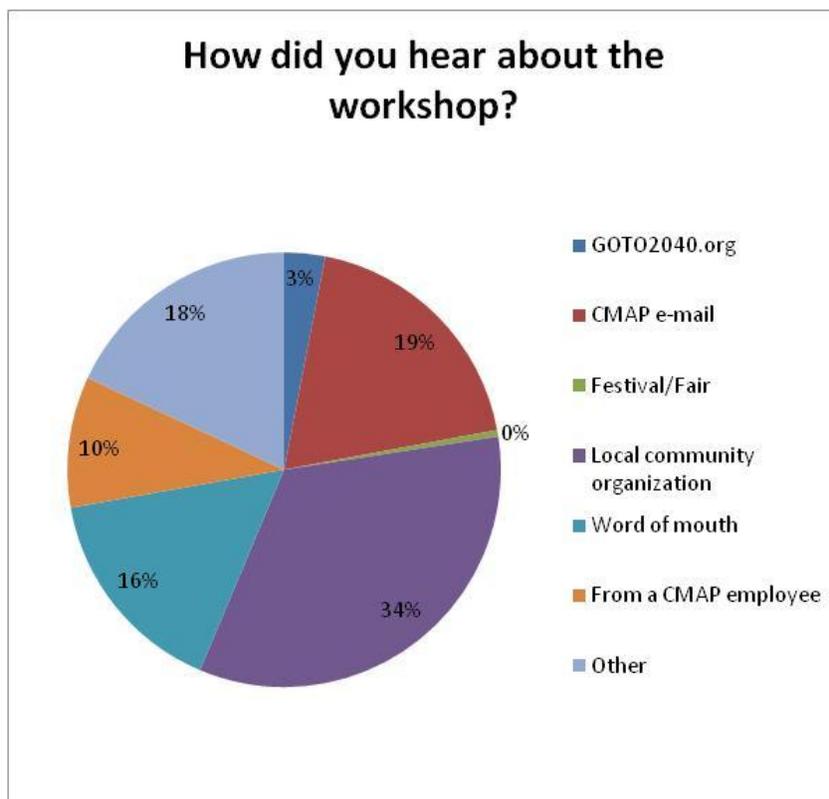


Figure 15 Workshop responses to how participants heard about the workshop